

Serial No.: 10/507,051
Filing Date: September 9, 2004
Docket No.: 041206.034

Amendment to the Drawings:

The attached drawing sheets are a second submission of the formal drawings previously-submitted.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested. In support, the Applicant respectfully submits the following arguments:

I. Objection to the Drawings.

The drawings have been objected to by the Examiner, although no grounds for the objection were given. Further, the Examiner has indicated that corrected drawings will be required in this application *if it is found in condition for allowance* and simultaneously indicated that corrected drawings are required for the current reply.

The Applicant has previously submitted formal drawings. Further, the Applicant has rigorously reviewed the drawing sheets, and can find no deviation from the requirements of 37 C.F.R. 1.121(d). MPEP 707(a)(2) requires:

The reasons for any adverse action or any objection or requirement will be stated in an Office action and such information or references will be given as may be useful in aiding the applicant...

Because the reasons for the Examiner's objection are not stated in the present Office Action, and because the Applicant has reviewed the drawings and found them to be in compliance with formal requirements, Applicant is unable to respond further to this objection.

Therefore, the Applicant has re-submitted the formal drawings, and respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw her objection.

II. Objection to the Specification.

The specification has been objected to by the Examiner. The Examiner has indicated that the abstract, "Figure 2," is of issue, but no specific grounds for the objections are given. The

Applicant has rigorously reviewed the specification sheets, including the abstract, and can find no deviation from the requirements of MPEP 608.01(b).

Again, MPEP 707(a)(2) dictates that the examiner must state the reasons for any objection in an Office action and such information or references as may be useful in aiding the applicant. Because the reasons for the Examiner's objection to the abstract of the specification are not stated in the present Office Action, and because the Applicant has reviewed the abstract of the specification and found it to comply with formal requirements, Applicant is unable to respond further to this objection.

III. Rejection of Claims 1-7 and 9-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claims 1-7 and 9-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over EP 1,391,080 (hereinafter EP '080) in view of Anderson, U.S. Pat. No. 5,167,903, (hereinafter USPN '903).

"To establish a prima facie case of obviousness of a claimed invention all the claimed limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art." *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 U.S.P.Q. 44, 496 (C.C.P.A. 1970); see *KSR Int'l. Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 550 U.S. ____ (2007); see also MPEP 2142.

The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the examiner, because EP '080 in combination with USPN '903 fails to disclose or suggest each and every limitation of Claim 1 and Claim 7. Claim 1 of the present invention relates to a slat comprising a trough which contains a plurality of juxtaposed inserts arranged parallel to one another. Page 2, lns. 6-7; pages 4-5, lns. 35-6 and 1, respectively. Each insert takes the form of a folded sheet-metal plate comprising two parts *connected along a folded line*: 1.) a *support strip arranged parallel to the*

direction of the incidence of the laser beam and 2.) an *oblique strip which is inclined with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam*.¹ Page 2, lns. 8-14; page 5, lns. 25-6.

EP '080, in contrast, discloses a method for supporting a work-piece during laser cutting. This method includes the use of a plurality of support elements (2) constructed in the form of strips connected by means of pins (3). Page 2, lns. 22-4. A plurality of sets of support elements may be combined together to form a link chain. Page 1, lns. 79-81. EP '080 does not disclose a trough in which juxtaposed inserts are contained as required by Claim 1 of the present invention, but rather, the inserts of EP '080 are grouped or formed into chains by means of pins.

EP '080 also does not disclose "a *support strip*" arranged *parallel* to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam "*connected along a folded line*" to an "*oblique strip*" which is *inclined* with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam. Each of these elements are required by Claims 1 and 7. The upper part of each strip described in EP '080 is beveled or oblique (rather than parallel) to the incidence of the laser beam. The upper part of the strip described in EP '080 is a support element. Page 1, lns. 74-5. The other side of the strip in EP '080 is arranged parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam. Page 2, lns. 26-8; Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

As explained in the specification of the present invention, it is known in the prior art to form a cutting table of a juxtaposition of plates which are inclined with respect to the direction of the laser beam in order to allow deflection of the beam between two adjacent plates, and JP 08 108291 was referenced as an example. Page 1, lns. 30-5. This arrangement, however, may

¹ Claim 7 also contains these limitations.

pollute and damage the product to be cut due to the impact of the laser beam on the inclined plates. Page 2, lns. 1-2. The arrangement of the "plate" of JP 08 108291 is the same as the support strip of EP '080, both of which are *inclined or beveled* with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam. The support strip arranged *parallel* to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam is critical to the present invention, because this element overcomes the drawbacks posed by the prior art by distancing the supported product from the impact of the laser beam while deflecting the laser beam with the oblique strip. Page 2, lns. 15-18.

Further, the strip of '080 is a solid structure pin or plate with a beveled point contrasted with a folded, thin sheet-metal plate required by Claims 1 and 7 of the present invention. Indeed, in EP '080, each strip (2) is formed of a plate which is beveled in its upper part (the plate is not folded along a folded line).

USPN '903 discloses a tray with edge rails for directly receiving support bars which are arranged exclusively parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam. Col. 4, lns. 57-60; ex. Figs. 16, 17, and 18. USPN '903 also fails to disclose a slat for a conveyor table comprising a *trough* containing juxtaposed inserts. The support bars of USPN '903, similarly to that of EP '080, do not equate the inserts formed from folded, thin sheet-metal plates of the present invention. Most importantly, the parallel arrangement of the support bars of USPN '903 completely lack the parallel portion of the support strip, connected along a folded line, to an oblique strip. The support bars of USPN '903 do not provide any obstacle to prevent penetration of the laser beam, and certainly will not distance the material to be cut from laser beam deflection, as will the support bars of the present invention.

Thus, EP '080 in combination with USPN '903 completely fail to disclose the following elements of Claim 1 of the present invention:

- a trough containing a plurality of juxtaposed inserts.

Further, the combination also fails to disclose the following elements of Claims 1 and 7 of the present invention:

- inserts formed from folded, thin sheet-metal plates; and
- a support strip substantially parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam, which is connected along a folded line to an oblique strip which is inclined with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam.

Because the combination of EP '080 and USPN '903 does not disclose each and every element of Claim 1 and Claim 7 of the present invention, they are not obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, Applicant requests the allowance of Claims 1 and 7. Further, because Claims 2-6 and 9-22 depend therefrom, Applicant also respectfully requests allowance of these Claims for the reasons stated above.

IV. Rejection of Claim 8 and 23-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claims 8 and 23-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Anderson in view of EP '080. Claim 8 relates to a laser cutting table comprising a plurality of juxtaposed slats with a trough containing a plurality of juxtaposed inserts. Similarly to Claims 1 and 7, each insert takes the form of a folded sheet-metal plate comprising two parts *connected along a folded line*: 1.) a *support strip arranged parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam* and 2.) an *oblique strip which is inclined with respect to the direction of the incidence of*

the laser beam. Page 2, lns. 8-14; page 5, lns. 25-6. As discussed in detail above, EP '080 in combination with USPN '903 completely fail to disclose the following elements of Claim 8 of the present invention:

- a trough containing a plurality of juxtaposed inserts;
- inserts formed from folded, thin sheet-metal plates; and
- a support strip substantially parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam, which is connected along a folded line to an oblique strip which is inclined with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam.

Accordingly, because the combination of USPN '903 and EP '080 fails to disclose each and every element of Claim 8, it is not obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Therefore, Applicant requests allowance of Claim 8. As Claims 23-27 are dependent upon Claim 8, Applicant respectfully requests allowance these Claims for the reasons stated above.

A favorable action and an early issuance of the case are earnestly solicited. Applicant has included payment for a two-month extension of time. The Director is hereby authorized to change any additional fees or credit overpayment to deposit account 024300.

Respectfully Submitted,



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